



20 DEC 1966

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: Leaks of Sensitive Information

Pursuant to your memorandum of December 3, 1966, to the Cabinet and Heads of Agencies, I am reporting measures in effect within the Central Intelligence Agency to assure against leaks of sensitive information. The need to protect such information from unauthorized disclosure is of paramount importance to this Agency and to the intelligence community and is one which receives our constant attention.

Within CIA, the principal measures in effect on the four points noted in your memorandum are:

(1) Sensitive information is identified by appropriate classifications as authorized by Executive Order 10501. In addition to these government-wide markings, special control words and warning indicators especially applicable to intelligence information are used as provided in appropriate directives for the intelligence community. Still further restrictions exist for our most sensitive intelligence which is maintained within compartmented units that require special clearances for access and have special security provisions for storage and transmission.

(2) CIA's security program is designed to preclude unauthorized disclosure of its information and to comply with my statutory responsibility to protect intelligence sources and methods. The program includes provisions for the secure storage of information, the stringent screening of applicants and contractors, a security indoctrination program for all personnel, periodic reindoctrination programs, and special briefings for all those authorized access to compartmented intelligence. Internal Agency regulations contain detailed procedures to ensure against premature disclosures or leaks of information to persons not having a "need to know." One such procedure requires approval from my office before speeches, publications, or other public statements relating to intelligence can be made by CIA personnel.

(3) CIA policies concerning penalties for unauthorized disclosures and security violations are set forth in a number of regulatory issuances and notices. These pertain to violations for which a penalty is prescribed by law and also to offenses which call for appropriate administrative action. In addition, lessons from recent hostile espionage operations are stressed in periodic issuances, security orientation lectures, and in our intelligence training courses.

(4) The very nature of the Agency's operations makes security a constant theme. For example, "security consciousness" is one of the qualities considered in preparing periodic performance ratings on all employees. Surveys and spot checks conducted by security officers, both here and abroad, help to keep our security program meaningful and current.

I realize, of course, that the finest security program can be thwarted by inadvertent or deliberate leaks of sensitive information. Such leaks can cause irreparable damage to our intelligence collection capabilities and can multiply needlessly the cost of our intelligence effort. To curb leaks of intelligence and other sensitive information, the Security Committee of the U. S. Intelligence Board, under the chairmanship of CIA, conducts inquiries of unauthorized disclosures that do occur and makes recommendations for improving the effectiveness of security practices within the intelligence community.

You can be assured of my deep concern with this problem and my continuing efforts to deal effectively with it.

/s/ Richard Helms

Richard Helms  
Director

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